

BOOK REVIEWS

LIVER BIOPSY. An Atlas of Histologic Appearances. R. G. Shorter. 111 pp. Illust. Pergamon Press, Inc., New York; Pergamon Press Ltd., London, 1961. \$9.50.

This new book is of interest primarily to pathologists. It is essentially an atlas of the histologic appearances of a broad range of hepatic diseases. The illustrations are of a high quality.

Needle biopsy of the liver has become a common and useful procedure in the diagnosis of liver disease. The book starts out by listing the indications for and contraindications to needle biopsy of the liver, the care of the patient, the various techniques which may be employed, the after-care of the patient, possible complications, the care and preparation of the liver samples, and the limitations of the method.

A detailed description is given of the normal histologic appearances of liver tissue and the preferred terms which should be used in describing these features. This is followed by the details of common pathological features of liver disease. The subject of viral hepatitis is introduced by Dr. Baggenstoss of The Mayo Clinic, and the four forms, acute icteric hepatitis, fulminant hepatitis, anicteric hepatitis and intrahepatic cholestasis of viral origin, are described minutely. The features of most of the important diseases which may occur in the liver are given in a more or less stereotyped manner. These conditions are illustrated with excellent black-and-white photomicrographs. To facilitate finding what the reader is seeking, a table of contents and an adequate index are provided. Two hundred and sixty-eight references to the more recent and important publications relevant to the subject matter are listed at the end of the book.

This new book should be very useful to the clinician who is interested in this method of clinical investigation, and particularly to the pathologist who is confronted nowadays with the interpretation of liver biopsies, encountered commonly in pathologic practice.

PATHOLOGY. 4th ed. Edited by W. A. D. Anderson. 1389 pp. Illust. The C. V. Mosby, St. Louis, Mo., 1961. \$18.00.

The fourth edition of this comprehensive, multi-authored textbook of pathology maintains the standard set in earlier editions. In general, chapters are clearly written, and set forth the pathology of disease processes from the morphological point of view, with adequate clinical-pathological correlation. In some instances a fuller exposition of basic mechanisms of disease seems called for. The book is excellently illustrated, the photographs mainly showing gross pathological changes and microscopical alterations as viewed with the light microscope. One would like to see more electron-micrographs, for example in the chapters on renal and hepatic disease.

Anderson's book will probably remain a standard item in the library of the practising pathologist. It can also be recommended to trainees in pathology and to undergraduate medical students. Adverse criticism seems churlish in reviewing such a generally useful work. One must note, however, that some chapters ripe for review remain practically unchanged from the third edition — for example, the chapter on degenerative changes and disturbances of metabolism and that on

neoplasms. The former gives no account of the basic nature of cellular degenerations; the latter deals very superficially with the matter of experimental carcinogenesis and lists no references more recent than 1951 — thus ignoring the work of a decade in which much significant research has been done, for example that concerning the relationship of viruses to cancer. The chapter on heredity and constitution in disease which was present in the third edition has been dropped. This seems surprising in an era in which genetic factors in disease are attracting much attention. One would have expected to see a thoroughly revised chapter in the fourth edition, embodying a frame of reference and up-to-date information in this field. It is true that various of the chapters on systemic pathology cover genetic aspects of specific disease processes, but often in a very condensed fashion. New chapters which are most welcome deal with hypersensitivity diseases and with mesenchymal tumours.

There are certain notable changes in format in this fourth edition. The "small print" has disappeared, and the entire text is printed in a point somewhat smaller than the large print of the earlier editions. The third edition had 1402 pages, 1294 illustrations, and 11 colour plates, weighed 6.712 lb., and was priced at \$16. The new edition has 1389 pages, 1385 illustrations and 7 colour plates, weighs 8.772 lb. and costs \$18.

SIDE EFFECTS OF ANTI-OBESITY DRUGS. American Lecture Series. Ashton L. Welsh, 243 pp. Illust. Charles C. Thomas, Springfield, Ill.; The Ryerson Press, Toronto, 1962. \$10.50.

This monograph surveys the problem of obesity and its treatment, as it exists on the North American continent. The side effects, particularly dermatologic, of the many drugs used in the treatment of patients suffering from obesity were responsible for initiating the author's interest in this problem, but his presentation has as much appeal for a practitioner as for a dermatologist. It is written in a terse, tongue-in-cheek, but very readable style. Part I, in which obesity is defined, classified and described, is practical and brief. Part II is a virtual vade-mecum of anti-obesity drugs with descriptions of all their pharmacologic and pharmaceutic features, short of their price. These are classified according to Modell, and cover the wide range of available "crutches", ending with formula-diets and the like. Reported and personally conducted patient-trials are reviewed. The latter, though short-term, contain worth-while numbers of patients and were placebo-controlled. Each one concluded with the words "weight loss was greater when patients adhered faithfully to prescribed hypocaloric dietary regimens" and "after withdrawal of medication, when patients did not continue to adhere, faithfully, to low-caloric diets, lost weight was quickly regained". So might the report of every trial that has been carried out, be ended. Many of these are listed in the 16-page bibliography. The author's review of the side reactions and toxic effects of each agent is especially complete and well tabulated.

This is excellent reading for anyone interested in the treatment of obesity, and is particularly valuable for anyone involved in the use or assessment of anti-obesity agents.